



## VULTURE PROGRAMME MONTHLY REPORT

November 2018

## MEETINGS AND EVENTS

| Date                  | Met with                                  | Representing                   | Purpose   | Project title/reference/purpose                      |
|-----------------------|---|--------------------------------|---|--|
| 01/11/2018            | Supporters and volunteers                 | Private                        | VulPro held a lunch at the facility for 25 of our followers and supporters. The day composed of presentations given by Kerri Wolter, Lara Jordan, and Charne Wilhelmi about the work that goes into conserving vultures. This was followed by a tour given by our operations manager, Orbert Gayesi   | VulPro Lunch   |
| 01/11/2018            | Lara Jordan                               | VulPro: Research Manager       | Discussion around the up and coming Raptor Research Foundation conference being held in Kruger and which talks and workshops to attend as there were multiple meetings and talks throughout the conference. Preparation for Lara's two presentations as well as giving Kerri's presentation on vulture tagging.   | Raptor Research Foundation Conference                |
| 05/11/2018-06/11/2018 | Michael Lanzone                           | Cellular Tracking Technologies | Michael Lanzone and his family spent 2 days at VulPro to see first hand the conservation work that VulPro undertakes. Michael is the CEO of Cellular Tracking Technologies, and awarded VulPro the conservation award for 2018 which including 21 tracking devices to aid our vulture telemetry studies, along with covering the service provider fees for the life of each device. | Funder and collaborator                              |
| 07/11/2018            | VulPro Staff                              | VulPro                         | General staff meeting and discussions of duties to be continued whilst Kerri is away in the USA   | Staff meeting  |
| 13/11/2018            | VulPro Volunteers                         | VulPro                         | Meeting to touch base on duties to be completed, as well as refreshing all on rules and working areas   | Volunteers   |
| 12-15/11/2018         | Raptor Research Foundation Annual Meeting | Kruger National Park           | Showcase VulPro's work, cement established relationships and to develop new collaborations  | Raptor Research Foundation Conference                |
| 14/11/2018            | Megan Murgatroyd                          | Kruger National Park           | Discussed new collaboration to use VulPro tracking data for analysis and modelling of vultures to assist in determining windfarm placement to avoid vulture movement patterns   | To reduce collision risk of vultures                 |
| 17/11/ 2018           | Raptor Research Foundation delegates      | VulPro                         | Delegates from the conference visited VulPro for the day to enter further discussions on research and collaborations and to show case VulPro  | Discuss future collaborations and to share knowledge |

| Date            | Met with                     | Representing             | Purpose  | Project title/reference/purpose       |
|-----------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| 08 – 18/11/2018 | IUCN workshop and conference | IUCN and VulPro          | Kerri Wolter attended the IUCN workshop and conference where she received a full scholarship to attend. Vultures were one of six case studies and thus Kerri had the opportunity of showcasing the difficulties of saving vultures across their foraging ranges and highlighted their threats and the work VulPro undertakes to try and turn things around for the species | IUCN wildlife workshop and conference |
| 21/11/2018      | Lara Jordan                  | VulPro: Research Manager | Full day of discussions and catch up on the Raptor Research Foundation conference and the IUCN workshop and conference. Research and related topics were discussed   | Research                              |
| 22/11/2018      | Sarah Hochgeschurz           | Vet                      | Discussion around VulPro's veterinary needs  | Veterinary needs                      |
| 26/11/2018      | Juergen Dummon               | Collaborator             | Skype meeting to discuss Kerri's pending trip to Germany to meet with Max-Plank institute where discussions will take place around research, tracking devices and collaboration  | Research and Europe trip              |
| 28/11/2018      | Staff meeting                | VulPro                   | Monthly staff meeting and discussed Decembers' research projects   | Monthly staff meeting                 |
| 28/11/2018      | TUT students                 | University of Tshwane    | Interviews were held with 2 TUT students in which to discuss their placement work experience year coming up.   | Student placements                    |

### **Media**

Ongoing media, awareness and exposure through Facebook and Twitter, as well as other social media throughout November; with 5000 followers on Kerri Wolter's profile and 10 136 on VulPro's Facebook page. We have 1128 followers on Twitter and 623 followers on Instagram.

| Date       | Media          | Publisher       | Purpose  | Comment  |
|------------|----------------|-----------------|--|--|
| 12/11/2018 | Filming        | 50/50           | Film about the work VulPro does and the importance of vultures | Awareness and exposure   |
| 30/11/2018 | Online article | Alberton Record | "Help the vulture population"                                  | Article on vulture rehabilitation and help from the public reporting grounded vultures |

## CONSERVATION

### A. DIRECT ACTIVITIES

#### *Rehabilitation*

| Date       | MR Ref | Activity   | Follow up   | Comment   |
|------------|--------|--|---|---|
| 03/11/2018 | 01.11  | Collected an injured African White-backed Vulture from the Blouberg Nature Reserve               | Monitoring for improvement and then release                                 | The bird was found to be emaciated, suffered from electrocution and a severe infection in her wing which is still currently being treated. We are trying to save the wing so the bird can once again be released. Prognosis is guarded. |
| 06/11/2018 | 2.11   | Collected CV 362 from Hekpoort   | N/A as will become a breeding bird given his failure to survive in the wild | He was found to be dehydrated and has abrasions on both wings from his tags which have now been removed. As this was his six release we have decided he will now remain in captivity.   |
| 06/11/2018 | 3.11   | Collected a Cape Vulture which was already dead from the Limpopo Province at the Walt Restaurant | N/A   | The bird was knocked down and killed by a vehicle.  |
| 08/11/2018 | 4.11   | Collected grounded CV fledgling from the Magalies Golf Park                                      | Monitoring for release  | The bird was found to be a little skinny but otherwise, dehydrated and confused having landed in an area which was not suitable for him to take off again.  |
| 12/11/2018 | 5.11   | Collected a Hooded Vulture Nestling from the Olifants River Private Game Reserve                 | Monitoring for improvement  | The nestling was found with a broken and rotated leg. We have since pinned the leg in the correct position but prognosis is guarded given the damage caused by incorrect use of the stronger leg and using the wings to try push up.    |
| 14/11/2018 | 6.11   | CV 367 was collected from the Rhino Lion Nature Reserve  | Monitoring for release  | Once again CV367 had to be rescued after having done fairly well in the wild for 3 weeks. He was found in the dump site, hungry and confused. We will attempt one more release.   |
| 18/11/2018 | 7.11   | Collected a Cape Vulture in the Eastern Cape from an electrocution                               | N/A as the bird died a day later  | The bird was found to be badly injured with burnt feathers and internal haemorrhaging.  |
| 24/11/2018 | 8.11   | Collected an African White-backed Vulture from Polokwane   | Monitoring for improvement and release                                      | The bird came in dehydrated and weak with slight co-ordination issues. We suspect slight toxicity but no confirmation of this.  |

| Date       | MR Ref | Activity  | Follow up                  | Comment  |
|------------|--------|---|----------------------------|--|
| 24/11/2018 | 9.11   | Collected a Steppe Buzzard from Nystroom  | Monitoring for improvement | The bird has a wing injury from a collision. He is being treated and physio being undertaken as the wing has stiffened up as he was kept in captivity by a landowner for a week before we were contacted.                    |
| 24/11/2018 | 10.11  | Collected a Cape Vulture fledgling from the Cosmos squatter camp in Hartbeespoort | Monitoring for release     | The bird was captured by trapping the bird on top of the Magaliesberg Mountains above the squatter camp. He was shocked and had injuries on his beak from where he was being kept. He will be released once fed up a little. |
| 25/11/2018 | 11.11  | Collected a grounded Cape Vulture fledgling from Leloka                           | Monitoring for release     | The bird was found stuck in a small garden unable to take off again. She is being fed up and will be released shortly.   |
| 26/11/2018 | 12.11  | Collected a green pigeon  | Monitoring for release     | VulPro has been requested to assist with more wildlife rehab. As such, we collected a grounded Green Pigeon which appears to be missing his tail feathers. He is being stabilised and treated accordingly.                   |
| 26/11/2018 | 13.11  | Collected a grounded Cape Vulture fledgling from the Nooitgedacht colony          | Monitoring for release     | The vulture was captured by staff and legs were bound. She had a bruised eye which has healed well.  |
| 28/11/2018 | 14.11  | Collected an adult Spotted Eagle Owl with a broken wing                           | N/A                        | Unfortunately due to the severity of the break and the bone sticking out, the owl had to be humanely euthanised  |
| 29/11/2018 | 15.11  | Collected a Cape Vulture fledgling from Thabazimbi                                | Monitoring for improvement | X-rays have shown an injured spine which has resulted in paralysis of his legs. He is being slung with extensive physio and laser in addition to pain meds and antibiotics in the hope this will all help.                   |

**Vulture breeding statistics: Captive and wild**

| <b>Date</b>   | <b>Project title</b> | <b>Project centered at</b> | <b>Comment</b>  |
|---------------|----------------------|----------------------------|---|
| November 2018 | Captive Breeding     | VulPro                     | To-date, three of the four Cape Vulture fledglings have left their nests as well as 2 of the three African White-backed vulture nestlings. All nestlings and now fledgling are doing well and their pending release is being prepared and discussed. We are also happy to announce we have secured tracking devices for each of them, thanks to Cellular Tracking Technologies. |

**Research**

| <b>Date</b>   | <b>Project title</b>                      | <b>Location</b>                | <b>Comment</b>  |
|---------------|---|--------------------------------|---|
| November 2018 | Vulture re-sighting database              | VulPro                         | Continued to update the re-sighting database- Including repeat individuals, we have recorded 35 545 re-sightings to date.   |
| November 2018 | Vulture tracking device studies           | Southern Africa                | Continue to monitor the vultures with tracking devices and assess their movements and investigate any stationery positions. Currently there are still 6 active with cellular tracking units and 5 active transmitters with Movebank |
| 7/11/2018     | The Conservation Symposium                | St Ives, Howick, KwaZulu-Natal | Presented 'The translocation of Cape Vultures ( <i>Gyps coprotheres</i> ) and spatial movement patterns'.   |
| 10/11/2018    | Cape Vulture Bumblefoot Research          | VulPro                         | The original 7 study individuals were recaptures, and measurements where re-taken for the post-graduate study dissertation.   |
| 12/11/2018    | Raptor Research Foundation annual meeting | Kruger National Park           | Presented 'Anatomical investigation of safe area for wing tagging". As part of a team leading a morning workshop on the subject of tagging and tracking its value and limitations.  |
| 14/11/2018    | Raptor Research Foundation annual meeting | Kruger National Park           | Presented 'Home range and habitat selection of captive-bred and rehabilitated Cape Vultures ( <i>Gyps coprotheres</i> ) in Southern Africa  |
| 14/11/2018    | Raptor Research Foundation annual meeting | Kruger National Park           | Presented 'Sexual Dimorphism in African White-backed Vultures ( <i>Gyps africanus</i> ) plumage and biometrics.   |
| 15/11/2018    | Raptor Research Foundation annual meeting | Kruger National Park           | Accepted the Celltrack Conservation Award during the Gala dinner ceremonies.  |
| 23/11/2018    | 319 captive reared and, released in 2017  | North West Free State border   | Ground truthed 319 vulture on the Free State North West border. This vulture moved into the area recently and we investigated the reasons for this.   |
| 28/11/2018    | 319 captive reared and, released in 2017  | Malu North West province       | Identified 319 was with 80 other vultures foraging on the cattle farm. Also identified a new vulture restaurant had been set up.  |

| Date       | Project title    | Location                 | Comment   |
|------------|------------------|--------------------------|---|
| 28/11/2018 | Powerline Survey | Malu North West province | 3 Km and 26 structures were surveyed to ascertain safety of the powerlines for vultures, a report was written to Eskom to request preventative measures to be implemented on powerlines where vultures are known to roost.  |
| 30/11/2018 | Calcium study    | VulPro                   | Sampled 30 captive birds for the ongoing calcium study. We are also testing Vitamin E and D levels in addition to their calcium as a general health examine and to determine if they are in fact deficient of certain vitamins based on their current diet of 80% pork. |

### **Education & Training**

| Date                  | Activity                               | Project title                          | Location    | Comment   |
|-----------------------|--|--|-------------|---|
| 05/11/2018            | Volunteers                             | Volunteers                             | VulPro      | Volunteer Estelle from the USA spent two days at VulPro before attending the Raptor Research Foundation conference; to assist and learn more about the importance of vulture conservation and the work we do.                                     |
| 08/11/2018            | Education and Awareness                | Education and Awareness                | VulPro      | 12 people from the USA, who attended the Raptor Research Foundation Conference spent the morning at VulPro to see first-hand what VulPro undertakes on a daily basis.   |
| 08/11/2018-18/11/2018 | Education, Collaboration and Awareness | Education, Collaboration and Awareness | Chicago-USA | Kerri Wolter attended the IUCN Specialist Wildlife Re-introduction Workshop in Chicago.   |
| 09/11/2018            | Education and Awareness                | Education and Awareness                | VulPro      | Four USA guests spent the morning at VulPro to learn about the work we undertake, before heading off to the Raptor Research Foundation conference.  |
| 10/11/2018            | Education and Awareness                | Education and Awareness                | VulPro      | A group of 3 toured the Centre and had close up experiences with some of the captive birds.   |
| 12/11/2018            | Education and training                 | Education and training                 | VulPro      | Three guests from the Loskop dam vulture project visited the Centre and received training as to the correct management of vulture restaurants and the importance of that management to save guard vultures from utilizing the vulture restaurant. |
| 16/11/2018            | Volunteers                             | Volunteers                             | VulPro      | Volunteer Fran Fitzpatrick arrived from the UK. She will be assisting us at the Centre and learning about the work we do until the 7 <sup>th</sup> of December.   |
| 20/11/2018            | Education and Awareness                | Education and Awareness                | VulPro      | 50 Children and 9 adults from Camp Nelu spent the morning at VulPro. They were given a presentation and a tour of the facility to learn about the work VulPro undertakes and the importance of conserving vultures.                               |

| <b>Date</b> | <b>Activity</b>         | <b>Project title</b>    | <b>Location</b> | <b>Comment</b>   |
|-------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|--|
| 24/11/2018  | Education and awareness | Education and Awareness | VulPro          | A couple with their child visited the centre and enjoyed the wild birds feeding at the restaurant.   |
| 27/11/2018  | Education and Awareness | Education and Awareness | VulPro          | 40 Children from the Diepsloot community spent the morning at VulPro. They were given a presentation and a tour of the facility to learn about the work VulPro undertakes and the importance of conserving vultures. |

### ***Administration and Pending***

- Collection of donated carcasses
- Maintenance of VulPro vehicles
- Ongoing treatment and care of vultures and birds of prey at VulPro.
- Ongoing care for captive vultures and supplementary feeding of wild birds at Nooitgedacht.
- Fundraising
- Report writing
- Proposal submissions to various funders
- Press release writing
- Administration
- Vulture restaurant feeding at the Vulture Centre
- Facebook, Instagram and Twitter updates
- Maintenance
- Management of volunteers and students
- Management of the vulture hide and bookings
- Management of HR issues
- Management of VulPro as a whole
- Management and co-ordination of vulture research
- Maintain updated captive breeding and rehabilitation records
- Continual updates to website, including range maps of tracked birds, sponsor logos, and publications.